

# To Walk with Jesus

By: Lenny Chapman

Do you ever wonder what it would have been like living in the days with Jesus? Through the Bible we can see images by reading of what it was like, but still, the thought of placing myself there with Jesus is hard to create within my mind. It is difficult to imagine the anticipation of His coming into the city, or walking along the dusty trail with the multitude following Jesus. Would I have known this was the Messiah? Would I have been willing to give up “my life” to literally follow Him? Would I have run to my family, friends, and colleagues with surety convincing them to follow Jesus? Allowing my mind to wander like this sometimes helps to put today’s life into better perspective.

Like many who claim to follow Jesus today, countless numbers followed Jesus from a distance. They followed when it was convenient, and when they felt they would receive something in return. In John 6, we are told that many turned and walked away from Jesus because His teachings were thought to be too hard to follow or understand. Jesus then said unto the twelve, ***“Do you also want to go away?”*** Peter quickly responded, ***“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”*** Jesus then challenged Peter’s response by saying, ***“Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil. He spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.”*** (John 6:67-71). What response would we have made at that moment? Would any of us have been that quick and confident to reply as Peter? One thing for sure, none would have wanted Jesus to say things about us, as He did about Judas in that encounter!

There were also many who were influenced in their thinking regarding Jesus by priests, scribes, and elders of the time. Would I have been one to stand by the authority of the appointed religious leaders, or would I have been able to see the truth of Jesus and stand firmly with my belief? How much persuasion would I have been able to take without crumbling and succumbing to the pressure? Today, Christians in this country face minimal pressure when it comes to practicing religion faithfully. Most comes from “so-called” friends or family members ignorant of scriptural truths. Also, pressure can come from within, thinking that others will not like the “new you.” Thoughts that I might lose my friends because of the changes I need to make! Jesus said, ***“If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me”*** (Luke 9:23). Back in the day of Christ, many lost friends, family, personal status, reputation, and even their life for following Jesus. There were those who followed Jesus openly, and there were some who only sought Jesus secretly. How much would I have been willing to offer Him?



My heart tells me that I would have known Jesus, that I would have identified Him as the Messiah. That with a confident, joyful heart would have walked with Jesus openly along the road to the city of Jerusalem, or wherever He would be going each day. Great excitement is created by allowing my mind to create a picture sitting around a table or on the ground sharing a meal with Jesus while He teaches the small group. However, my mind tells me that I may have had some reservations in that thinking had I lived back then. If it were that obvious why did so many NOT BELIEVE!

This question is still often asked today, “Why do so many not believe?” It seems so obvious to those who read the Bible that Jesus was, is, and forever will be the Son of God! It should be much easier today to express one’s religious belief in this because in this country we experience very little to no molestation when practicing one’s faith. Jesus said, ***“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.”*** He also said, ***“But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven”*** (Mat. 10:33). So, let us pick up our cross and profess our faith and confidence in Jesus every day, beginning today!